

Timber Lakes...

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was an event that drew visitors to the county, and to Timber Lakes, 55 cars per hour entered the front gate.

Wasatch County Fire Chief Jerry Davis said embers can jump fire breaks and roads as wide as 30 feet wide.

But, because a fire would be unpredictable, and people caught in the area could become disoriented, even though they might know the escape routes, Sheriff Mike Spanos thought the solution is to just designate safe areas where they could congregate until they could be led out.

"It's law enforcement's responsibility to be up there and actually direct [people out]; to find the best way to get people out of there, depending on the location of the fire. We have communications. We have the command center...If we had a fire up there, I think we would almost have to establish which exit is going to be the safe way out. I don't think when there is, and if there is a fire up there, that it's going to engulf all of Timber Lakes. There's going to be a way out.

"If we respond as quickly as we've been responding, and get our equipment there, we're going to direct people who are not familiar with the area, and get them out. That's going to be our primary responsibility," said Spanos. He said first responders could arrive in about ten minutes.

He said it is impossible to predict how to keep everybody safe in every situation, but there definitely needs to be another exit, that heads in a different direction from the ex-

isting roads.

Farrell said the county-approved plan for Timber Lakes calls for three roads out, that are always open and maintained. He agreed there should be at least one exit out of the top of the subdivision, which would head north to Lake Creek Rd., but the two-mile road would have to cross private property. Cummings said the property owners are very concerned about security, which would be jeopardized if roads across their land had to be kept open.

County Attorney Steve Hansen said it would be up to the homeowners association to work out an access agreement with the private property owners, and the county has no jurisdiction in the matter. But, he said, "During the fire season, security ought to take a back seat to safety. All adjoining property owners, of private property surrounding Timber Lakes, should be contacted. There should be a request to open free access...at least for the next six weeks."

Breeze said the roads would need to be graded, and asked who would pay the costs. Hansen responded that the next step should be to determine who should be responsible for making all the escape roads passable.

Spanos said it's already hard to keep trespassers and vandals off the private property without opening up more roads. Cummings suggested installing crash gates on those roads, which Spanos said would help.

The people at the meeting agreed to form a fire exit committee that would tour the subdivision and in-

ventory the roads, immediately, and put together some recommendations for an emergency plan. Commission Chairman Moroni Besendorfer emphasized that this is a dry year and an escape plan, with several options, must be put in place immediately.

In the meantime, the homeowners said they would place signs pointing to the exits along all roads. Wallberg said signs marking the exits themselves should be different from the directional signs, so they would be easily recognized. He said he would clear brush from along the sides of the roads.

Cummings agreed to remove the metal gate identified as a safety hazard, but hedged when Farrell tried to get him to take responsibility for maintaining the exits across his property, at least so that Wallberg would be satisfied that they would be passable with a two-wheel drive vehicle.

"We'll do the best we can...I'm not agreeing to go up there and spend a lot of money to maintain those private roads through that property...We grade those roads every year, and I've already graded those roads this year," said Cummings.

Spanos said he didn't think the solution would be to try to make every road passable for the lowest, two-wheel drive car, because it isn't possible to control every problem that could arise during an emergency. He said Cummings and the homeowners should agree to an acceptable standard.

The group was stymied about what to do about a locked metal gate on a main exit that could be

taking out any more vegetation than necessary, and the county is concerned about how much is graded because of the effect on the environment, erosion and stream pollution. He suggested that Cummings and the homeowners association work together to identify the collector roads with the heaviest traffic, and those that will only serve a few cabins. He suggested that they make recommendations for the commission to review and determine whether or not to modify the code to permit roads narrower than 26 feet.

Cummings recalled that the county agreed last Fall that all roads in the county should not have to meet the same standards and that the ordinance must be flexible so that each road could be built according to demand and use. He said he couldn't believe Timber Lakes property owners wanted to destroy the mountain with a 26-foot-wide road that would be used by just a few vehicles. He said he and property owners presented a joint recommendation last Fall for different road widths based on use. He added that he thought he had done a good job on the roads he had built so far.

But a member of the homeowners association board of directors, Jim Poulson, said, "As each plat was developed, there was a plan put forward for a given road width. Then, either through non-attention, or whatever the cause, we have roads in that area now that are somewhat less than 12 feet wide. There's no way on God's earth that can meet the fire code. Somewhere, somehow, we've got meet the obli-

